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Editorial: Officials must rethink LLCs

According to an exclusive report by Tony Cook of The Indianapolis Star Tuesday, “a special prosecutor has been appointed to look into allegations that Monarch Beverage, the state’s largest beer distributor, illegally funneled more than \$1.5 million in campaign contributions to some of Indiana’s most powerful elected officials.”

These allegations stem from the fact limited liability companies, commonly known as LLCs, in the state face no regulation by the Indiana Election Commission, unlike corporations. Monarch Beverage, through the LLC called Vision Concepts, stands accused of illegally giving large sums of money to state politicians of both parties including House Speaker Brian Bosma, the House Republican Campaign Committee, the Indiana Republican Party, former Gov. Mitch Daniels, Gov. Mike Pence, former Gov. Joe Kernan, the Indiana Democratic Caucus and John Gregg, former House speaker and current candidate for governor.

As Cook reported, the loophole exists because LLCs didn’t exist when the IEC laws were written. This is understandable. What is also understandable, but far more infuriating, is the lack of political will to change this system

now that we know how the gaps in the law are being exploited. The answer to why this is allowed to continue is as clear as it is maddening: These politicians benefit from the status quo, so what incentive do they have to change it?

For nearly a decade Monarch Beverages has tried to strike down the state's prohibitions on beer wholesalers from also distributing hard liquor. Their motivation is clear, and their viewpoint is well-represented. Politicians in the state rake in piles of cash from this broken system. Their motivation is clear, and their viewpoint is well-represented. Those left out of this dirty equation, the state's taxpayers, have a stark choice: They can participate in this corrupt arrangement if they have the cash and apparatus, or they can be left in the cold with no one to advocate for them.